“If I Had Been a Man”: Genetic, Anthropological, and Chimeric Reflections on an Altered Face

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I haven’t looked like this photo in a long time…

Me, in a male version.

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Abstract: This article examines a seemingly simple personal experiment—using AI to generate the face I might have had if I had been born with a Y chromosome—to reveal its deeper anthropological, genetic, and philosophical implications. Through this counterfactual projection, I explore notions of sexual dimorphism, alternative phenotypes, and the concept of an “XY genetic twin,” connecting them to my ongoing work in paleogenetics and 3D cranial reconstruction, including a forthcoming feature article and cover to be published in December. This reflection also aligns with my Meta-Genesis theory, which envisions all forms of life—past, present, and future—as possible states of a single underlying biological field. The AI-generated face thus becomes more than a curiosity: it becomes a mirror of unactualized trajectories of the living, a reminder of the multiplicity of potential identities encoded within each of us.

There are moments, at the heart of our trajectories, when seemingly ordinary experiences open unexpected doors. Submitting a photograph of oneself to an artificial intelligence is not

spectacular in itself, but when the algorithm returns not just a simple filter, but the face you *might* have had if you had been born with a Y chromosome, the exercise shifts into an entirely different realm: that of alternative lives, possible identities, and genetic bifurcations that reshape an entire destiny.

For several years, I have been exploring biological chimeras and computational chimeras—those crossroads where imaginary bodies intersect with the logics of the living. This “XY” face generated by AI naturally falls within that continuity. It does not replace anything: it reveals. It presents me not with a fictional man, but with a counterfactual genetic twin, a speculative version of myself that never existed, but could have.

This reflection also echoes one of my most recent scientific projects: a 4–5 page article dedicated to cranial reconstruction through paleogenetics, which will be published in December as the central feature of an American journal, accompanied by the cover page. This type of reconstruction, grounded in ancient DNA and morphological analysis, extends precisely the same logic: how a genetic profile shapes a face, and how a face reveals a genome. The AI experiment I describe here becomes, therefore, a natural—almost intimate—extension of my current research.

The Y-Twin: an identity chimera born from a single chromosome

What the AI generates here is not a “male disguise.” It is a mathematical and anthropological projection:
→ *What would a face become if we altered the logic of development by introducing **SRY**, the master gene of the Y chromosome?*
→ *How would hormones, bone growth, skull balance, and soft-tissue dynamics change as a result?*

In my work in paleogenetics and 3D reconstruction—especially in the forthcoming article—I analyze exactly this type of transformation: brow ridges, supraorbital relief, mandible, soft-tissue thickness. The face produced by the AI follows the same constraints: it translates a genomic variation into a morphological variation.

This face is therefore not a “cross-dressed me,” but an **alternative phenotype under a modified genetic constraint**.

An inner chimera: what I could have been, what I am not

We all carry, silently, lives that were cut short before they ever existed: the one we might have lived in another country, another body, another circumstance. The XY face generated by AI is an identity chimera, a being who shares my genetic heritage… but only up to a point. It is a version of me stripped of one X and endowed with a Y, a divergence produced by one of the smallest chromosomes of the human species.

This chimera is not only biological: it is psychological. It raises a question that is simple yet dizzying:

If I had been a man, would I have become the same person?
Would I have studied genetics, paleogenetics, 3D reconstruction?

Would I have been as free—or as constrained?
Would I have accomplished the same things?

AI as a chimera-making machine: anatomy of a transformation

What the AI does in this exercise is fascinating: it uses millions of faces to map the statistical differences between a male and a female face. It does not "think" in terms of skulls or tissues. It applies probability equations. But biology constrains this numerical potential, which nevertheless follows the rules of human development.

In my forthcoming article, I show how a 3D reconstruction can reanimate an ancient skull—how DNA, tissue-depth data, and anthropometric models converge. The AI, here, acts according to a similar logic: it extrapolates a probable face from a given structure.

This is where my computational chimeras meet my biological chimeras: a translation of the living, but through the prism of calculation.

Me as XY vs. a fictional brother: two distinct genetic narratives

There is a crucial scientific nuance—one that AI erases but biology enforces:

- A male version of me (XX → XY) = a variation within *my own* embryological trajectory.
- A fictional brother = a unique genetic recombination, another genome, another person.

The XY face produced by the AI represents the first case. In genetic anthropology, this distinction is dizzying: my "XY self" would have carried a paternal chromosome that was never transmitted to me. It would have inherited a genealogical archive—a fragment of masculine family memory—that remained inaccessible to me.

The Y chromosome: an evolutionary relic and a vector of memory

Unlike autosomal DNA, the Y chromosome is a straight line through genealogy. It carries the memory of paternal migrations and lineages. The XY face therefore reveals another dimension: it is an heir to lives I know, but do not biologically carry.

Biology or culture? The role of sex in shaping a life

If the Y chromosome alters the shape of a face, it does not determine intelligence, creativity, or destiny. What does change a life, however, is how society treats a male or a female body—and that can reshape an entire trajectory.

My "XY self" would have grown up in a world where different things are expected or demanded. Perhaps I would have faced fewer obstacles… or more. A different socialization. A different perception of myself. The AI exercise thus becomes philosophical: a different body does not guarantee an easier life or a harder one—only a different one.

Embryology reminds us that everything begins the same way

There is a simple fact, too often forgotten: every human embryo begins on a female template.
It is only when **SRY** activates that a cascade of differentiations alters:

- the development of the gonads,
- the hormones,
- the proportions of the face,
- the overall morphogenesis.

The XY face generated by AI is a reminder that the masculine is not an opposite to the feminine, but a late deviation from an initial shared blueprint.

The chimera we carry within ourselves

What fascinated me about this experiment is that it reactivates something central to both my scientific and artistic work: the question of possibilities—what I call *genomathmatics*.

In my paleogenetics research, and in the article to be published in December, I reconstruct faces from ancient DNA and silent skulls. With AI, it is my own face that becomes an alternative archive, an intimate chimera.

We are all beings of bifurcation. Of genetic paths not taken. Of lives that could have been written differently.

The XY face is not a fantasy: it is the echo of a possible self, a science of the counterfactual, a mirror held up to the person I am—and to all the versions of myself I have never met. And it is precisely here that my *Meta-Genesis* work regains its deeper meaning. Because behind this simple play of appearance—a male face computed by a statistical model—lies a larger, almost vertiginous intuition: what if all forms of life, past, present, and future, were merely different expressions of a single fundamental being?

Not separate creatures, but different quantum solutions of one universal biological system. Not diverging lineages, but possible states of the same informational field, actualized according to context, environment, or the randomness of mutation.

From this perspective, my “XY self” is only one point among countless others in a vast space of potentialities. Just as a medieval petrous bone, an australopithecine primate, or an organism yet unknown that will emerge in ten thousand years can all be understood as iterations of life, inscribed within a mathematical structure that transcends them.

Meta-Genesis formulates precisely this hypothesis: that life is not a chain of accidents, but a tree of states—a superposition of possible identities, of which only certain branches become real. Like in quantum mechanics, where a particle can exist in multiple states until

observation collapses one of them, biology might be a system of successive collapses of possibility, frozen into the marble of the genome.

The XY face calculated by AI is then only a hypothetical collapse, a virtual incarnation among the infinity of forms I could have taken. A projection into a state-space wider than biology. A version among all those that life has either chosen or discarded.

And what if all living beings—from the first unicellular organism to hominins, from vanished lineages to the chimeras we imagine, from trees to bacteriophages, from primates to humans—were multiple manifestations of a single fundamental schema, a single logic, a universal biological archetype?

What if each being were merely a coordinate within a morphological space of life, an embodied fragment of a single principle?

The XY face thus becomes more than a technological curiosity. It becomes a faint signal, a resonance. A soft, intimate proof that our identities are never fixed: they are access points within a biological continuum, a field of possibilities that life has been exploring for four billion years.

The question, then, is no longer: *who would I have been had I received a Y?*

But rather: *how many versions of "me" are still sleeping within the immense space of the living? And how many have existed, will exist, or will never exist?*

This is an original theory that I published several weeks ago, and which now forms one of the pillars of my thinking about life. You can find my latest work and developments on this approach at the following links:

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Kayser-Cuny, V. (2025). Genomathematics or the Science of Erased Trajectories. Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17086950